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LETTER DATED 17 DECEMBER 1996 FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

The members of the Security Council express their appreciation for your letter dated 20 November 1996 (S/1996/966) concerning the consultation meeting on Afghanistan, held in New York on 18 November 1996. Following the discussion of the letter on 10 December 1996, I am pleased to inform you that the members of the Security Council welcome your initiative to convene the meeting and share your assessment that it was a useful gathering of a group of countries that are in a position to support your efforts towards a peaceful solution of the Afghan conflict. The members of the Security Council support your intention to convene further informal meetings of this group from time to time.

The members of the Security Council reaffirm their full support for the continuing efforts of the United Nations, in particular those of the United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan, to facilitate national reconciliation in Afghanistan. They welcome the fact that participants at the meeting on 18 November 1996 confirmed the central role of the United Nations in promoting the peace process and that they expressed support for your call for close coordination of their own efforts with United Nations mediating efforts.

The members of the Security Council remain gravely concerned at the ongoing civil war in Afghanistan and reports of acts of discrimination against women, as well as by obstacles created to the activities of the United Nations and humanitarian agencies.

The members of the Security Council stress the need for the Afghan parties to cease immediately all armed hostilities, renounce the use of force, put aside their differences and engage in a political dialogue aimed at achieving national reconciliation and a lasting political settlement of the conflict.

The members of the Security Council will continue to follow closely the developments in Afghanistan.

(Signed) Francesco Paolo FULCI
President of the Security Council

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